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## Senate

The Senate met at 9:45 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

### PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal King, ruler of all nature, thank you for the opportunity to serve You and country. Help us to give government what belongs to government as we render to You our faithful stewardship.

Lord, guide our lawmakers to make right choices in challenging times. Enable them to feel Your presence and become lights to a dark world. Open their eyes to see Your daily gifts and blessings, infusing them with a spirit of gratitude.

Protect our Nation from sea to shining sea, as You empower us to live for Your glory.

We pray in Your wonderful Name. Amen.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH). The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to address the Senate for 1 minute in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

### NATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM DAY

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, today is a very important day that we recognize once a year—National Religious Freedom Day. It is a day when

we celebrate America's longstanding commitment to religious freedom.

The First Amendment to the Constitution protects that right for Americans. Unfortunately, this fundamental right we have great respect for in the United States is under attack internationally in many autocratic countries.

Around the world, people are being persecuted for their faith by authoritarian dictatorships and terrorist groups. Countries like China, North Korea, and Russia restrict their citizens' rights to practice their own religion.

China, for example, plans to enforce additional restrictions on religious groups starting February 1. That is already on top of a very bad record they have for religious freedom. That is in regard to China, but it would apply to all countries.

I have legislation to require the United States to work to block World Bank projects in wealthy countries like China and Russia that abuse religious freedoms.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

### IMPEACHMENT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, it took 4 weeks—4 weeks, but the Democratic majority in the House of Representatives is finally ready—fi-

nally ready—to defend their impeachment of the President of the United States.

After weeks of delay, the Speaker of the House decided yesterday that a trial could finally go forward. She signed the impeachment papers. That took place at a table with a political slogan stuck onto it. And they posed—they posed—afterward for smiling photos. And the Speaker distributed souvenir pens—souvenir pens—to her own colleagues, emblazoned with her golden signature that literally came in on silver platters. The pens literally came in on silver platters. There were golden pens on silver platters, a souvenir to celebrate the moment.

I seem to remember Democrats falling over themselves to say they did not see impeachment as a long-sought political win. House Democrats said over and over that they recognized the gravity and the seriousness of this action, and, of course, they had only come to it reluctantly. Well, nothing says seriousness and sobriety like handing out souvenirs, as though this were a happy bill-signing instead of the gravest process in our Constitution.

This final display neatly distilled the House's partisan process into one perfect visual. It was a transparently partisan performance from beginning to end.

That is why they sped through a slapdash inquiry in 12 weeks, when previous Presidential impeachments came after months, if not years, of investigations and hearings. That is why the House cut short their own inquiry, declined to pursue their own subpoenas, and denied the President due process, but now—now they want the Senate to redo their homework and rerun the investigation.

That is why our colleague the Democratic leader told the press that whatever happens next, as long as he can weaponize the trial to hurt the Republicans in the 2020 election, "it's a win-win." That is what the Democratic leader of the Senate said.

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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